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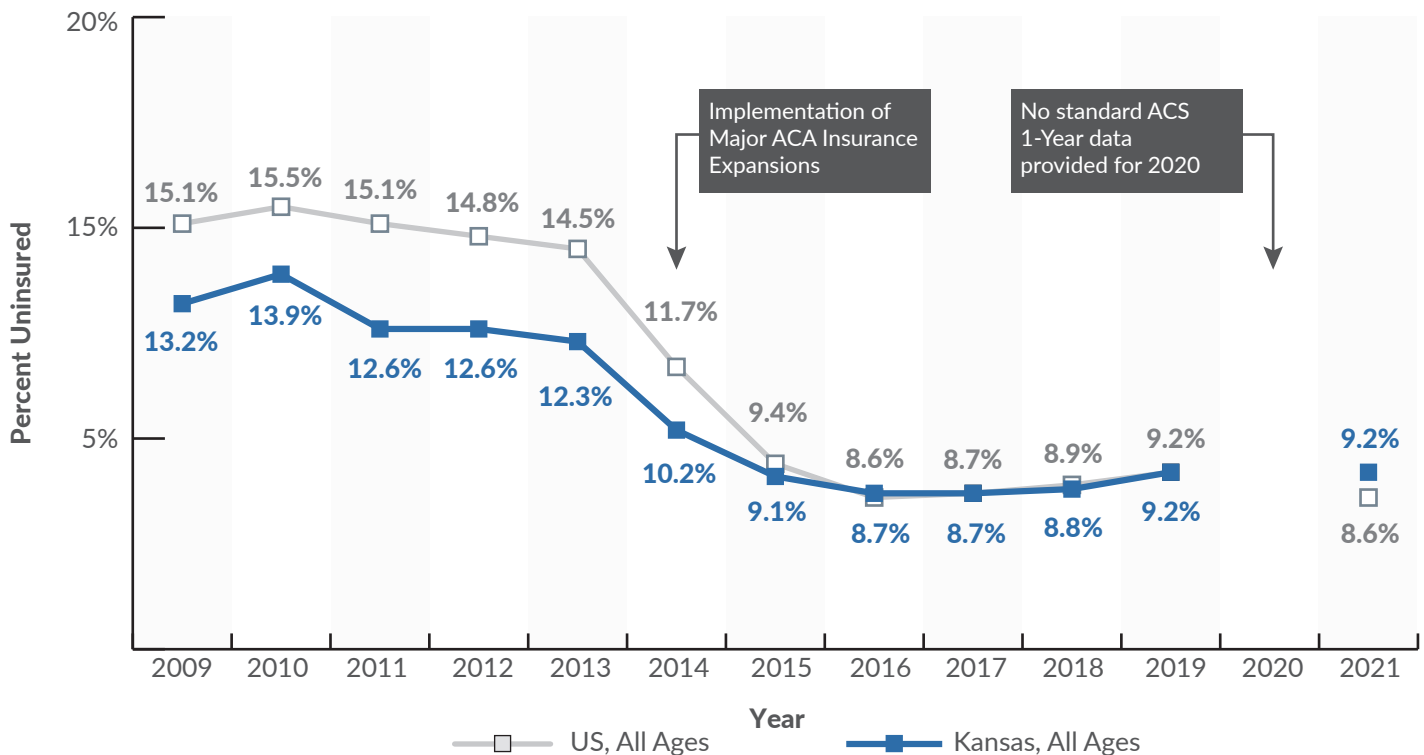
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# Kansas Uninsured Rate Now Higher Than the United States

Topeka, Kansas — The U.S. Census Bureau today released its latest estimates of health insurance coverage in Kansas and across the United States. Amid state and federal policy decisions to promote access to health insurance coverage during the pandemic, the national uninsured rate fell to the lowest level since the Affordable Care Act was fully implemented. However, gains in coverage were not even across states. The uninsured rate in Kansas is now significantly higher than the uninsured rate in the U.S. for the first time in decades. While the Kansas rate did not change from 2019, the national uninsured rate improved over the same time.

The uninsured rate in the U.S. was 8.6 percent in 2021, a statistically significant decline from the 9.2 percent uninsured rate in 2019. The uninsured rate in Kansas was 9.2 percent in 2021, unchanged from 2019. This represents 28.2 million uninsured Americans and nearly 264,000 uninsured Kansans in 2021. The difference between Kansas and the U.S. in 2021 primarily reflects a higher uninsured rate in Kansas among working age adults. There are also significant disparities among Kansas residents by race and ethnicity. Detailed data are available in the accompanying chart pack.

### Uninsured Rates for Kansas and the United States, 2009-2021



Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic's effect on federal survey data collection, the U.S. Census Bureau did not provide standard ACS 1-Year data for 2020. Source: Kansas Health Institute analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 1-year Estimates, Table S2701, 2009-2019 and 2021



## Kansas Uninsured Rate Now Higher Than the United States *(continued)*

“For many years Kansans could know that our rate of health insurance coverage was better than the country as a whole. After the ACA took effect, we saw the national rate catch up to Kansas, and new data show us that in 2021, for the first time, the Kansas uninsured rate was higher than the U.S. overall. That’s a milestone we didn’t want to reach,” said Kari Bruffett, President and CEO of the Kansas Health Institute. “While there is good news in the data too – insurance coverage in Kansas overall held steady between 2019 and 2021, despite the COVID-19 pandemic – there are also continuing disparities in health insurance for Black and Hispanic Kansans.”

### **Additional points from the 2021 ACS data release:**

- Adults age 19 - 64 are more likely to be uninsured in Kansas compared to their peers around the country (13.5 percent in Kansas compared to 12.2 percent in the U.S.).
- After major ACA insurance expansions were enacted in 2014 — including Medicaid expansion in many states, but not Kansas — Kansas residents who identify as Hispanic or Black were more likely to be uninsured in Kansas than the U.S.
  - 20.3 percent of Kansas residents who identify as Hispanic were uninsured – a decrease from the 23.3 percent who were uninsured in 2019, but still higher than the 17.7 percent of Hispanic residents uninsured across the country.
  - 14.1 percent of Kansas residents who identify as Black or African American were uninsured compared to 9.6 percent across the country.
- Kansans living below 138 percent of the poverty line were more likely to be uninsured than those with similar circumstances in other states (18.5 percent in Kansas compared to 14.9 percent for the U.S.).

“The higher uninsured rate in Kansas compared to the U.S. signals that some Kansans face barriers to attaining comprehensive affordable health insurance that residents of other states do not,” said Phillip Steiner, M.A., Senior Analyst at the Kansas Health Institute. “There may be contributing factors other than policy differences like Medicaid expansion. KHI is looking forward to further investigating these data to better understand what might be driving the disparity.”

The U.S. Census Bureau will release additional data with state-level detail on October 20, 2022. Check our website frequently for additional analysis and information on the annual insurance update.

**NOTE:** This analysis uses data from the 2009–2019 and 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year Estimates released today. Earlier this week, the U.S. Census Bureau also released data from the 2021 Current Population Survey (CPS). Estimates of insurance coverage may differ slightly between the ACS and CPS. The ACS estimates are better for analyzing state-level data and therefore were used in this analysis.

*The Kansas Health Institute supports effective policymaking through nonpartisan research, education and engagement. KHI believes evidence-based information, objective analysis and civil dialogue enable policy leaders to be champions for a healthier Kansas. Established in 1995 with a multiyear grant from the Kansas Health Foundation, KHI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization based in Topeka.*

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